

S E C R E T ANKARA 000820

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR P, EUR, EUR/SE, NEA AND NEA/NGA;
NSC FOR AMB. KHALILZAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/30/2013

TAGS: PREL MARR PREF PHUM TU IZ

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRAQ: PAVING THE WAY FOR MULTI-PARTY
TALKS (IV) - TURKS UNRECEPTIVE TO MEETING WITH NON-ITF
TURKMEN

REF: A. DEUTSCH-KHALILZAD TELECON 1/30/03

1B. ANKARA 629 AND PREVIOUS

1C. STATE 18029

Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch. Reasons 1.5 b and d.

11. (S) DCM raised possible configurations for Feb. 6 multi-party talks (per Ref A) in successive bilats (US-Turkey), trilaterals (US-Turkey-KDP/PUK) and quads (US-Turkey-KDP/PUK-Turkmen) with MFA Deputy Director General for Middle East Affairs Safak Gokturk Jan. 31 (DG Burcuoglu was attending a National Security Council meeting addressing US military requests re Iraq and was therefore unavailable). Gokturk said he would have to pass the information to more senior levels for decision, but had the following initial reactions. It would not be acceptable for Turkey to have a session with the US, Turkey, the KDP, the PUK, the ITF plus another Iraqi Turkmen party. The KDP, he said, must reconcile itself to dealing with the ITF in a working relationship. This point, Gokturk continued, had been strongly raised with KDP leader Masoud Barzani by Undersecretary Ziyal on January 9. In response to Barzani's assertion that the ITF did not represent all Iraqi Turkmen, Gokturk told us, Ziyal said "you do not have a choice. You must cooperate with the ITF." If there was good will, Gokturk added, meeting with the US, PUK, Turkey and the ITF was something the KDP could do.

12. (S) On the possibility of two separate trilaterals (one US-Turkey-KDP/PUK and one US-Turkey-ITF) Gokturk said that such meetings might need to take place in the future on specific issues, but for a session like the one we envisaged that sought to lay out the way forward and avoid snags we needed to have all the parties together. The symbolism, he said, was significant, and Turkey did not want to be seen as concerned only with Iraq's Turkmen. As PM Gul had stated, he went on, Turkey is concerned with the welfare and security of all Iraqis, including the Kurds who are the Turks' brethren. "At this kind of a meeting, sanctioned and attended by two allies, with leaders of major groups coming here and meeting prior to important developments, we see no place for pseudo-Turkmen representatives in order to satisfy the KDP. That is not a way out. I'm sure my superiors will say that would be inconceivable.

13. (S) Acknowledging that Gokturk needed to seek guidance from senior officials, DCM urged the Turks to give the proposals some thought and noted that we are trying to bring the Iraqi Kurds in to see the role the US and Turkey feel they need to play based on our close consultations about possible developments in Iraq. DCM asked that the Turks get back to us with reactions and/or counter-proposals soonest.

14. (S) Comment: While not necessarily the last word from the MFA, there was no flexibility on the Turkish side in this exchange. We believe Gokturk's points accurately reflect what his superiors will say. We may need to take another look at ways to get all of the required parties face-to-face and will have to do so quickly if this is to happen next week. End Comment.

PEARSON